

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

Wednesday, 26 October 2016

United Nations recognises sustainability education efforts with Centre of Expertise

Tasmania's significant contribution to sustainability education has been formally recognised by the United Nations, with today's launch of Education for Sustainability Tasmania: a UN Regional Centre of Expertise.

The launch is the culmination of four years' work by a state-wide Community of Practice driven by the University of Tasmania to boost sustainability education and collaboration.

Today's launch will include the signing of MoUs between the University of Tasmania and not-for-profit organisation Sustainable Living Tasmania (SLT), and between TasTAFE and SLT.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students and Education) Professor David Sadler, who chairs the University's Sustainability Committee, said the MoU was a commitment to bringing people together to collaborate on education for sustainability initiatives.

"Tasmania has long held a key position in the global story of sustainability," Professor Sadler said.

"This international recognition reflects not only our island's history and culture but also the important role we will play in the environmental conversation in the future.

"We will be encouraging Tasmanians to find out more about the initiatives that have helped us gain UN recognition and also how to use education as a tool for building a sustainable future.

"With the support of the community, we aim to help more people develop the skills and capacity needed to protect our planet and ensure social and cultural prosperity for all."

Working with a team of University of Tasmania staff, Nutrition and Food Science lecturer Sandra Murray was instrumental in gaining the UN recognition for Tasmania.

Current efforts highlighted in the application included major projects for improving liveability and energy efficiency of low-income Tasmanian homes, the annual Tassievore Eat Local Challenge, working with Greening Australia on the Tasmanian Midlands Restoration Program, establishment of the Sustainability Learning Centre in Hobart, the national award-winning University Sustainability Integration Program for Students and numerous jointly hosted state-wide forums and workshops over the past few years.

Ms Murray said the UN's announcement recognised not only the importance of education for sustainability in a region such as Tasmania, but also the significant work being done by local organisations to improve and enhance approaches to sustainability.

"We are currently endorsing initiatives that build social, cultural, economic and environmental sustainability, and we want to share successful initiatives that others can implement in their areas," she said.

Todd Houstein, Executive Officer of Sustainable Living Tasmania, said he was looking forward to strengthening the profile and delivery of education for sustainability in Tasmania.

"We want to showcase what's being done across Tasmania, share the successes to date and make it easy for others to develop their own approach to delivering education for sustainability," he said.

The founding members of Education for Sustainability Tasmania include the University of Tasmania, TasTAFE, Department of Education, Independent Schools Tasmania, Northern Tasmania Early Years Group and Launceston Church Grammar School.

Tassal, Sustainable Living Tasmania and Greening Australia have also played a major role in establishing Education for Sustainability Tasmania and gaining UN recognition.

- For more information, visit the Education for Sustainability Tasmania website www.efstas.org

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY

Media are invited to attend the launch and MoU signing TODAY from 12pm – 1pm in Physics Building, Room 218 (see map attached) or via video link in Launceston (Newnham, Room A001) and Burnie (Cradle Coast Campus, Mooreville Rd, Room D214).

Information released by:

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